

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8577

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 6190

E.9. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GDS

SUBJ: INDIAN AID TO NORTH VIETNAM

1. ACCORDING TO A PRESS TRUST OF INDIA REPORT MAY 8, DEPUTY MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DAS TOLD PARLIAMENT THE SAME DAY THAT INDIA IS PROVIDING NORTH VIETNAM AGRICULTURAL AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY ASSISTANCE AS WELL AS TRAINING SOME OF ITS STUDENTS. DAS IS REPORTED TO HAVE ESTIMATED IN HIS WRITTEN STATEMENT THAT INDIA HAS " SO FAR" SPENT APPROXIMATELY 287,000 RUPEES FOR THESE PURPOSES (\$36,010).

2. IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE HAD SEVERAL LOW-KEY CONVERSATIONS AT THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS ABOUT THE SCOPE AND NATURE OF INDIAN FOREIGN ASSISTANCE TO HANOI. AN MEA INDO-CHINA DESK OFFICER CONFIRMED TO US IN EARLY APRIL THAT A SHIPMENT OF SEEDS TO NORTH VIETNAM HAD BEEN COMPLETED BY THE FALL OF 1974. ONE HUNDRED BUFFALO (VALUED AT 100-200,000 RUPEES) AS WELL AS SEVERAL SETS OF ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION EQUIPMENT (VALUED AT 10,000 RUPEES) WHICH WERE TO HAVE BEECOHIPED IN 1974 WERE NOW ONLY DUE TO BE SHIPPED LATER IN 1975. THE OFFICIAL THOUGHT THE SHIPMA
T MIGHT EVEN BE DELAYED
UNTIL THE VERY END OF 1975 BECAUSE OF A FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE PROBLEM WHICH HAD CAUSED THE ORIGINAL DELAY IN SHIPMENT. THE
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MEA OFFICIAL INDICATED THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WERE PRESSING

THE INDIANS TO RECEIVE THREE AGRICULTURAL EXPERTS FOR TRAINING
IN THE ANIMAL FODDER AND HUSBANDRY FIELD.

3. IN A CONVERSATION MAY 7, JOINT SECRETARY N.B. XMENON
OF THE MEA EAST ASIA DIVISION TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THERE
HAD BEEN NO FIRM THINKING YET ON INDIAN RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE
TO VIETNAM BUT THAT IT COULD BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED THAT
"STRONG POLITICAL SENTIMENT" FOR SUCH AID WOULD OPERATE WITHIN
THE GOI IN FAVOR OF SUCH ASSISTANCE. ACCORDING TO MENON, THE
INDIAN RED CROSS HAS ALREADY MADE SOME CONTRIBUTIONS AND
EFFORTS WOULD BE MADE BY THE GOI TO INCREASE ITS ASSISTANCE
BEYOND THE BUFFALOES AND EQUIPMENT CITED IN EARLY APRIL.

4. BOTH INDIAN OFFICIALS INDICATED THEIR AWARENESS OF
RELEVANT US LEGISLATION ON THIS SUBJECT.

5. COMMENT: THE DEPUTY MINISTER'S REMARKS ARE CONSISTENT WITH
THE PRIVATE OBSERVATIONS OF THE MEA OFFICIALS, BUT ARE THE MOST
AUTHORITATIVE
PUBLIC STATEMENT OF INDIAN ASSISTANCE TO NORTH
VIETNAM WE HAVE SEEN THUS FAR.
SCHNEIDER

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